

To: Liquid Waste Committee

From: Maari Hirvi Mayne, Program Manager, Enforcement and Regulation Liquid Waste,
Environmental Regulation and Enforcement

Date: May 5, 2025

Meeting Date: May 14, 2025

Subject: **Food Sector Grease Interceptor Bylaw Enforcement**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Liquid Waste Committee receive for information the report dated May 5, 2025, titled "Food Sector Grease Interceptor Bylaw Enforcement".

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Metro Vancouver Liquid Waste Regulatory Program officers promote compliance with, and enforce, the GVS&DD's six liquid waste bylaws to mitigate risk to the District, protect the environment and human health and safety, and recover costs from industrial users. A component of the regulatory program is enforcing the *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Food Sector Grease Interceptor Bylaw No. 365, 2023* which regulates discharges to sewer of fats, oils and grease from commercial food sector establishments (FSEs) by setting requirements for grease interceptors. The region's significant number of FSEs mean that inspections are prioritized based on municipal referrals of hot spots. In 2025, staff plan to inspect at least 350 FSEs, develop more stringent grease interceptor sizing requirements for some FSEs, continue to do outreach and education, and use Notices of Bylaw Violation where voluntary compliance efforts are not effective.

PURPOSE

To provide information about Metro Vancouver's activities related to liquid waste regulatory enforcement activities, and specifically those regarding fats, oils and grease discharges from commercial food sector establishments regulated through *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Food Sector Grease Interceptor Bylaw No. 365, 2023* (FSGI Bylaw).

BACKGROUND

At its March 12, 2025 meeting, the Liquid Waste Committee asked staff to report on enforcement efforts related to grease entering sewers from commercial food sector establishments. This report provides contextual information about Metro Vancouver's liquid waste regulatory program and FSGI Bylaw enforcement.

LIQUID WASTE REGULATORY PROGRAM

Metro Vancouver's Liquid Waste Regulatory Program supports the goals of the Integrated Liquid Waste and Resource Management Plan through regulation of the discharge of wastes to the region's sanitary sewer systems. The BC Environmental Management Act (Reference 1) authorizes the GVS&DD to regulate waste entering, directly or indirectly, "any sewer or drain connected to a sewerage facility operated by the district". Consequently, the GVS&DD has six liquid waste management bylaws (References 2 to 7) which mitigate risk to the District, protect the environment, human health and safety, and recover costs from industrial, and some commercial and institutional users.

Municipal Sewage Control Officers, appointed by the Board, are responsible for the administration of the GVS&DD liquid waste management bylaws within the boundaries of the GVS&DD. In the City of Vancouver, City staff administer these bylaws under a Memorandum of Understanding with Metro Vancouver. There are 11 Metro Vancouver officers and four City of Vancouver officers, whose primary roles are the regulation and enforcement of Metro Vancouver's liquid waste bylaws. Of these, approximately three full time equivalent officers are dedicated to FSGI Bylaw enforcement. Officers may enter property, inspect works, and obtain records and other information to promote compliance with the GVS&DD liquid waste management bylaws. Table 1 shows the types of dischargers regulated under the liquid waste management bylaws, their relative potential impact, and number of inspections conducted in 2024.

The enforcement team's main inspection focus is on permitted, high strength waste industrial dischargers, since these have the greatest potential impact to Metro Vancouver's wastewater treatment plants and regulatory obligations.

Type of Discharger	Potential Impact	Number of Dischargers	2024 Inspections
Permitted sites	High	269	230
Food sector establishments	Moderate	13,000 – 14,000	342
Trucked liquid waste	Low	10,000 homes 150 businesses	128
Fermentation operations	Low	124	88
Hospitals	Low	18	8
Sani-dumps	Low	11	11

Table 1 Regulated Liquid Waste Dischargers

FATS, OILS, AND GREASE AND THE FOOD SECTOR GREASE INTERCEPTOR BYLAW

The disposal of fats, oils, and grease (FOG) into the sewer system is an ongoing issue that costs the region over \$3 million every year. FOG build-up in pipes and on equipment leads to increased operating and maintenance costs and reduced flow capacity in the sewer system. Metro Vancouver uses public outreach to reduce FOG from residential sources from going down drains, with the annual "Wipe It, Green Bin It" campaign and other education initiatives.

The biggest source of FOG within the region is commercial food sector establishments (FSEs). The FSGI Bylaw, first adopted in 2012 and amended in 2023, regulates the discharge of FOG from FSEs by setting requirements around grease interceptors (GIs). GIs are engineered grease collection devices connected to all grease-bearing plumbing fixtures within commercial kitchens (such as sinks), and designed to retain FOG and solids while allowing wastewater to pass through. To prevent excess FOG and solids from entering sewers, GIs must properly sized and regularly cleaned.

With 13,000 to 14,000 FSEs in the region and limited officer resources, inspections of FSEs are scheduled based on geographic hot spots of FOG accumulation within sewers and pump stations, identified to Metro Vancouver by municipal staff. Officers request maintenance records, and conduct in-person inspections of FSEs to look for undersized or nonexistent GIs, bypassed fixtures, or inadequate maintenance, all of which contribute to downstream FOG issues. Non-compliance is addressed primarily through education and written warnings.

Since the bylaw was enacted, Metro Vancouver officers have inspected approximately 1,900 restaurants, coffee shops, pubs, and other FSEs, with the annual rate of inspections having fluctuated depending on available resources and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overall compliance challenges include:

- The significant number of FSEs in the region, with an increasing number of high grease producers
- A lack of awareness and education of FSGI Bylaw requirements, due to factors such as high ownership turnover within the restaurant sector and potential language barriers
- A lack of financial incentive, given typically low profit margins for FSEs

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

Metro Vancouver officers will continue to inspect FSEs, prioritizing identified FOG hot spots based on municipal referrals, with a goal of conducting at least 350 inspections in 2025. To address very high grease producing FSEs, staff are developing more stringent GI sizing and maintenance requirements for FSEs where there is high likelihood of causing downstream FOG issues.

Officers will continue to promote awareness of the FSGI Bylaw and seek voluntary compliance, by using newly updated educational materials produced in multiple languages.

In 2024, Notices of Bylaw Violation with financial penalties became available as an enforcement tool, and will be considered when education and written warnings are not sufficient to encourage voluntary compliance.

ALTERNATIVES

This is an information report. No alternatives are presented.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Liquid Waste Regulatory Program enforces liquid waste management bylaws which recover costs of wastewater treatment and the administration of the bylaws.

CONCLUSION

The Liquid Waste Regulatory Program's purposes are to protect the District's and its members' infrastructure, ensure that legal and regulatory obligations are met, protect the environment, public health and safety, and recover costs from industrial, and some commercial and institutional users. Officers will continue to enforce the FSGI Bylaw through inspections focused on municipal hot spots, promote awareness and seek voluntary compliance, and use NBVs if necessary.

ATTACHMENT

1. Presentation re: Food Sector Grease Interceptor Bylaw Enforcement, dated, April 17, 2025.

REFERENCES

1. *Environmental Management Act (SBC 2003, c 53)*. Retrieved from: https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/03053_00. Last accessed 2025, April 17.
2. GVS&DD bylaw No. 299, 2007, *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Sewer Use Bylaw No. 299, 2007* [consolidation] (25 May 2007). Retrieved from: https://metrovancover.org/boards/Bylaws/GVSDD_Bylaw_299_Consolidated.pdf Last accessed 2025, April 17.
3. GVS&DD bylaw No. 365, 2023, *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Food Sector Grease Interceptor Bylaw No. 365, 2023* (29 September 2023) Retrieved from: https://metrovancover.org/boards/Bylaws/GVSDD_Bylaw_365.pdf Last accessed 2025, April 17.
4. GVS&DD bylaw No. 365, 2023, *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Food Sector Grease Interceptor Bylaw No. 365, 2023* (29 September 2023) Retrieved from: https://metrovancover.org/boards/Bylaws/GVSDD_Bylaw_294_Consolidated.pdf Last accessed 2025, April 17.
5. GVS&DD bylaw No. 319, 2018, *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Hospital Pollution Prevention Bylaw No. 319, 2018* [consolidation] (26 October 2018) Retrieved from: https://metrovancover.org/boards/Bylaws/GVSDD_Bylaw_319_Consolidated.pdf Last accessed 2025, April 17.
6. GVS&DD bylaw No. 345, 2021, *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Trucked Liquid Waste Bylaw No. 345, 2021* [consolidation] (28 May 2021) Retrieved from: https://metrovancover.org/boards/Bylaws/GVSDD_Bylaw_345_Consolidated.pdf Last accessed 2025, April 17.
7. GVS&DD bylaw No. 346, 2021, *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Sani-dump Bylaw No. 346, 2021* (28 May 2021) . Retrieved from: https://metrovancover.org/boards/Bylaws/GVSDD_Bylaw_346.pdf Last accessed 2025, April 17.



Food Sector Establishment Grease Interceptor

Food Sector Grease Interceptor Enforcement

METRO VANCOUVER'S REGULATORY ROLE

Maari Hirvi Mayne

Program Manager, Liquid Waste Regulation, Environmental Regulation & Enforcement

Liquid Waste Committee Meeting, May 15, 2025

75692595

metrovancouver

1

LIQUID WASTE REGULATION

- BC Environmental Management Act authorizes the GVS&DD to regulate waste entering sewers and sewerage facilities
- GVS&DD Sewer Use Bylaw and five sector specific liquid waste bylaws regulate liquid waste discharges

LIQUID WASTE

- 299 Sewer Use
- 365 Food Sector GI
- 294 Fermentation
- 319 Hospital P2
- 345 Trucked LW
- 346 Sani-dump

metrovancouver

2

2

SEWER USE BYLAW 299, 2007

Purposes of Bylaw

1. Protect infrastructure; operate efficiently and cost-effectively
2. Promote beneficial use of biosolids
3. Protect public health, as well as the health and safety of municipal and MV sewer crews
4. Meet provincial regulatory obligations
5. Protect the environment
6. Charge user fees

REGULATED SITES BY THE NUMBERS

As of April 2, 2025

Type of Discharger	Potential Impact	Number of Sites	Inspections in 2024*
Permitted sites	High	269	230
Food sector establishments	Moderate	13,000 – 14,000	210
Trucked liquid waste	Low	10,000 homes 150 businesses	128
Fermentation operations	Low	124	85
Hospitals	Low	18	6
Sani-dumps	Low	11	11

* Metro Vancouver and City of Vancouver

FSGI BYLAW

What it does

- First adopted in 2012, amended 2023
- Sets requirements around grease interceptors for Food Sector Establishments (FSEs)

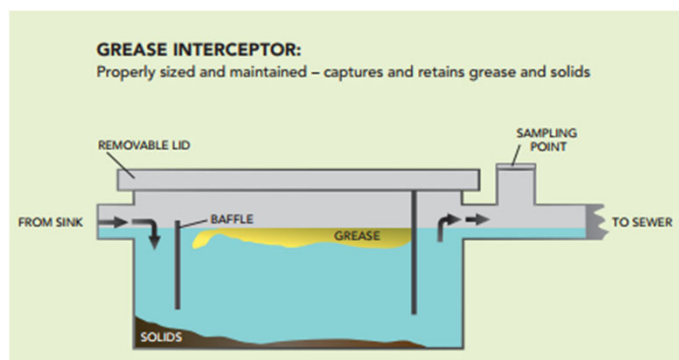


metrovancover

5

5

WHAT IS A GREASE INTERCEPTOR?



metrovancover

6

6

FSGI BYLAW ENFORCEMENT

- 3 officers for all FSEs in the region
- Inspections of hot spots identified by municipalities
- In-person inspection of kitchen and plumbing fixtures
- Common issues found:
 - Poor maintenance/cleaning of GI
 - Undersized or no GI



metrovancover

7

7

CHALLENGES

FSGI Enforcement

- Too many FSEs in region for regular inspections
 - Increasing number of high grease dischargers
- Lack of awareness/education
 - High ownership turnover of FSEs
 - Language barriers
- Lack of financial incentive



metrovancover

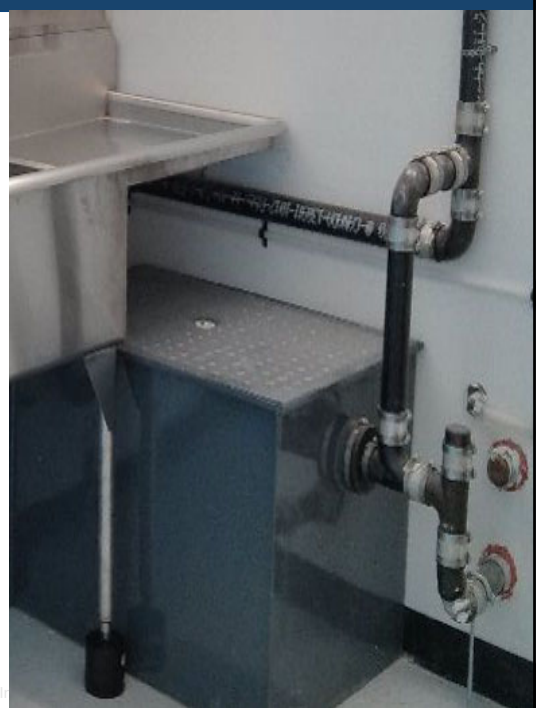
8

8

NEXT STEPS

FSGI Enforcement

- 2025 goal – 350 inspections
- Continue to prioritize hot spots
- Develop more stringent requirements for high grease dischargers
- Outreach and education
- Use Notices of Bylaw Violation as a deterrent



Grease Interceptor

metrovancouver

9

9



2024 Richmond FOG removal

Questions?

metrovancouver
Together we make our region strong

10

10

To: Liquid Waste Committee

From: Carol Nicolls, Communications Specialist, External Relations

Date: April 23, 2025

Meeting Date: May 14, 2025

Subject: **2025 Adult Toilet Training Campaign Launch**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Liquid Waste Committee receive for information the report dated April 23, 2025, titled “2025 Adult Toilet Training Campaign Launch.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Flushing disposable wipes contributes to sewer clogs, overflows, and damaged equipment that costs the region over \$2 million yearly. While there are other items that cause issues in our sewers, disposable wipes are the most problematic. To address this, Metro Vancouver is resurrecting a 2016 concept — Adult Toilet Training — that tackles wipes exclusively. Starting May 12, the campaign will target residents 18–34, as research shows they are the most likely to flush wipes. The concept delivers a singular message that asks residents to put wipes in the garbage while at the same time challenging the belief that there are “flushable” wipes. Campaign materials feature humorous bathroom tips, where one tip is always “never flush wipes.” The paid media buy includes placements on social media, Netflix, radio, restobar washrooms, and elevator screens. Campaign effectiveness will be tracked via the number of deragging incidents within the wastewater system and a 2026 post-campaign survey.

PURPOSE

To update the Committee on the launch of the 2025 regional Adult Toilet Training campaign.

BACKGROUND

The incorrect disposal of wipes and other items into the sewer system costs the Metro Vancouver region over \$2 million every year. Wipes do not break down quickly in the wastewater system and contribute to clogs, sewer overflows, and damaged equipment. Many wipes are labelled as “flushable”, which causes confusion for product users and is a significant barrier to correct disposal.

The Unflushables campaign that ran from 2017 to 2024 addressed seven commonly flushed items; however, the most flushed item continues to be disposable wipes. Because of this, Metro Vancouver is reintroducing a former concept — Adult Toilet Training — that focuses exclusively on how to correctly dispose of wipes, asking residents to put wipes in the garbage and not down the toilet.

The Adult Toilet Training campaign is one of four source control behaviour change campaigns that — along with education, policy, and enforcement — support the objectives of the current and future Integrated Liquid Waste and Resource Management Plan.

2025 ADULT TOILET TRAINING CAMPAIGN

The 2025 regional Adult Toilet Training campaign will take place from May 12 to June 22. The campaign targets a younger demographic and focuses on disposable wipes. The campaign is an updated version of an Adult Toilet Training-themed regional campaign, which took place in 2016 and targeted disposable wipes.

Campaign Approach

Recent results show that younger residents, particularly men, are the most likely to flush wipes. Based on this research, this year's campaign targets residents aged 18 to 34, skewing towards men. This year's campaign has shifted to focus only on wipes, instead of the seven items featured in previous years of the Unflushables campaign. Focusing on one item allows the campaign to have a clear message that asks residents to take a single action: put wipes in the garbage, not the toilet. Education on other unflushable items will continue to be featured on the Metro Vancouver website.

Creative Materials

Creative materials follow the 2016 Adult Toilet Training concept and feature humorous bathroom tips for both men and women. The second tip is always "never flush wipes" (see Attachment 1).

Media Strategy

The paid media buy includes digital (YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Netflix), radio, and out-of-home advertising in restobar washrooms and elevators in multi-family buildings. The media buy covers the region and will direct people to the campaign website: neverflushwipes.ca (live on May 9).

Engagement of Metro Vancouver Members

Campaign details and creative materials were shared with member jurisdictions' communications staff prior to the campaign's launch. All materials were made available for download on the Metro Vancouver website and custom, co-branded materials were created upon request.

Evaluation

Several measures are used to assess campaign effectiveness, including media buy results, surveys, and system impacts. Metro Vancouver continues to track the number of deragging incidents in its wastewater system and a post-campaign survey will take place in 2026.

ALTERNATIVES

This is an information report. No alternatives are presented.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2025 Adult Toilet Training campaign has a budget of \$169,000 supported under the Liquid Waste Services Communications Program.

CONCLUSION

The flushing of disposable wipes into the wastewater system is an ongoing issue around the region and contributes to clogs, sewer overflows, and damaged equipment. The refreshed 2025 Adult Toilet Training campaign will launch on May 12, using updated creative materials that were first developed for the predecessor regional campaign in 2016. Based on research showing that younger residents are the most likely to flush wipes, the 2025 campaign targets residents 18–34 and focuses only on wipes, allowing the campaign to have a clear message that asks residents to take a single action (putting wipes in the garbage, not the toilet). To help assess campaign effectiveness, Metro Vancouver will continue tracking the number of deragging incidents within its wastewater system and will conduct a post-campaign survey in 2026.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Sample of Campaign Materials (Washroom Posters).

75697943

Sample of Campaign Materials (Washroom Posters)

